



News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Agriculture Department issues fines and suspensions for pesticide violations

OLYMPIA – During the first quarter of 2003, the state Department of Agriculture (WSDA) issued fines totaling \$5,355 against eight individuals and one corporation for violating state pesticide laws and rules. Six of the individuals had their licenses suspended for a total of 52 days. Fines ranged from \$150 to \$1,650 for violations that included failing to submit pesticide application or structural inspection records as requested, not making applications according to pesticide label directions, and allowing a pesticide to drift onto a person or property.

A penalty matrix is used to ensure penalties are uniform and fair. The matrix takes into account the seriousness of the violation, whether it is a first or a repeat offense, and whether there are any aggravating or mitigating factors involved. Larger penalties often reflect repeat offenses or multiple violations within the same incident.

WSDA enforces state and federal laws to protect people, property and the environment against the improper use of pesticides. Staff also provides technical assistance to the pesticide industry and consumers, and enforces the rules on structural inspections for wood destroying organisms, such as carpenter ants, termites or certain beetles. About 200 allegations of improper distribution or misuse of pesticides, or faulty structural inspections are investigated each year.

To file a complaint involving the misuse of pesticide, or to find out if an applicator is licensed, call (877) 301-4555.

Admeyer Orchards, Inc., East Wenatchee. WSDA alleges that Admeyer Orchards, Inc. failed to assure that an employee applied pesticides according to the product label, and in a manner that would prevent the application from drifting onto people. The matter was settled with the corporation agreeing to pay a \$550 penalty.

Cameron Calaway, a commercial applicator for Agri-Specialties in Mattawa, was fined \$300 and his license was suspended for three days. In April 2002, Calaway failed to submit pesticide application records as requested by WSDA.

John A. DeSoto, a commercial pest control consultant for Home Check Inspection in Tacoma, was fined \$300 and his license was suspended for three days. In October 2002, DeSoto failed to submit Wood Destroying Organism inspection records as requested by WSDA.

David Galdeau, resident of Olympia. WSDA alleges that in the spring of 2002, when Galdeau applied herbicides to kill weeds on his property, the application drifted onto a neighbor's property damaging landscape plants. The matter was resolved with Galdeau agreeing to pay a \$500 penalty.

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Gerald Husband, commercial applicator, P.E.S.T., Quincy. WSDA alleges that in October 2002, Husband failed to submit pesticide application records as requested by the department. WSDA also alleges that Husband applied restricted-use herbicides at temperatures and times of the day prohibited by the rules. The matter was resolved with Husband agreeing to a six-day license suspension and a \$150 fine.

Danny B. Jones, commercial applicator, Waitsburg Helicopter Service, Waitsburg. WSDA alleges that when Jones applied insecticide to a cherry orchard in July 2002, the application drifted onto a residence and into a house. One person was exposed and became ill. The matter was resolved with Jones agreeing to a three-day license suspension and a \$600 fine.

Charles Patterson, Design Outdoors, Wenatchee, was fined \$600 for operating a pesticide application business in September 2002 without a commercial pesticide applicator's license.

Dwight F. Ropp, commercial applicator, Ropp's Spraying Service, Inc., Pasco. WSDA alleges that in September 2002, when Ropp applied insecticide to an alfalfa field, the application drifted onto a passing school bus exposing children. The department also claims Ropp did not properly store pesticides or keep accurate pesticide application records. The matter was resolved with Ropp agreeing to a 27-day suspension of his license for aerial applications and a \$1,650 fine.

Paul Wizner, commercial operator, Marsh Aviation, Athena, Oregon. WSDA alleges that, in June 2002, when Wizner applied insecticide to an alfalfa seed crop near Touchet, the application drifted across the Touchet River onto a hay field and two people. The hay could not be sold as a result of the incident. The matter was resolved with Wizner agreeing to a 10-day license suspension and a \$705 fine.

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